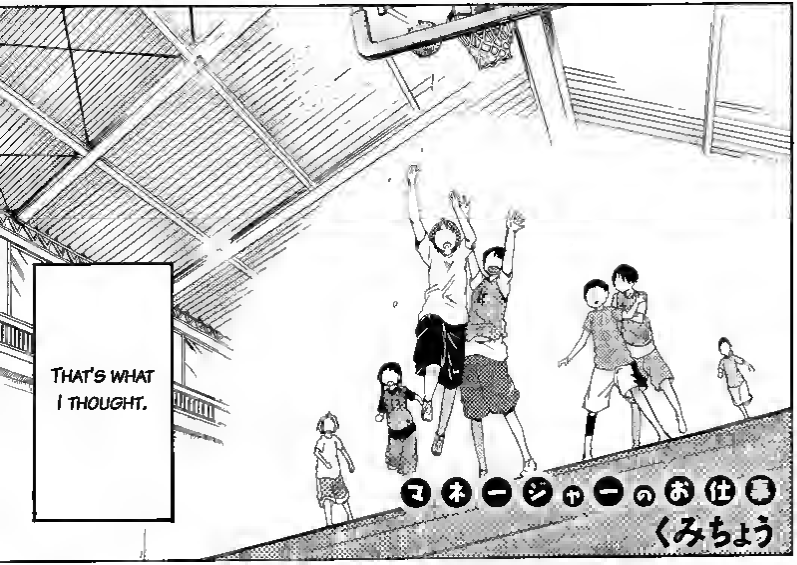
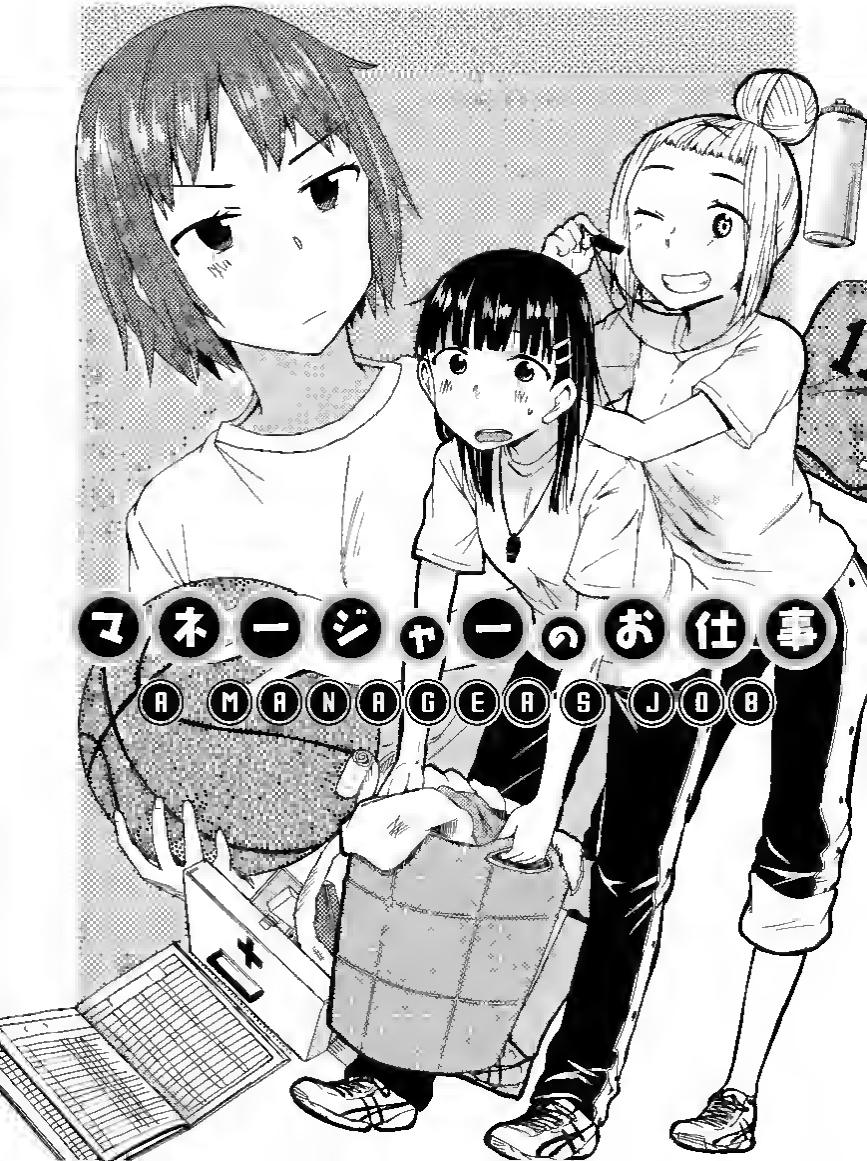
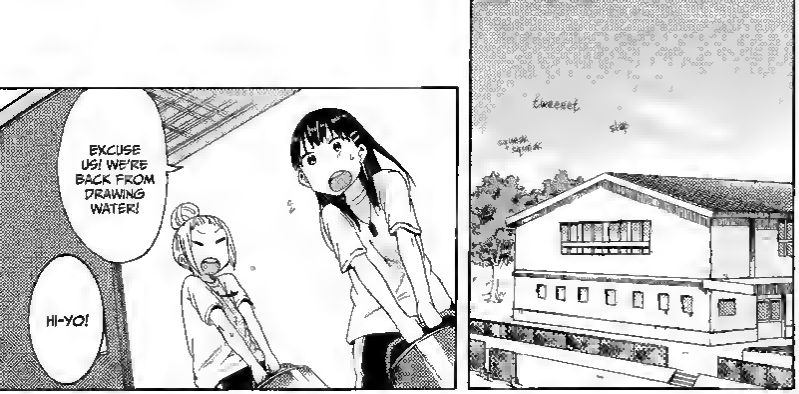
HIGH SCHOOL LIFE.
THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ENJOY A YOUTH FILLED WITH ROMANCE AND FUN CLUB ACTIVITIES,
AND THEN, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO DON'T.
OF THESE TWO GROUPS, I AM, WITHOUT ANY DOUBT, A MEMBER OF THE LATTER. I'VE ALWAYS BEEN AND WILL CONTINUE TO BE, CONTENT WITH A MODEST, UNREMARKABLE SCHOOL LIFE.


THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
マネージャーのお仕事
くみちょう

UP UNTIL THAT DAY.

くみちょう kumichou presents




EXCUSE US! WE'RE BACK FROM DRAWING WATER!
HI-YO!
tweeet
tweeet

I NEED TO GET TAPED UP!
WHERE'S THE NEW BOTTLE OF COLD SPRAY?
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
MANAGER, WATER!!
WHERE ARE THE TOWELS!?
YIKES!

AHH, GOD! DO SOME OF THIS STUFF YOURSELVES!
TOGETHER WITH MY BEST FRIEND CHINATSU, WE'RE THE MANAGERS FOR THE GIRLS' BASKETBALL TEAM.
TOWELS AND SPRAY, AND..
MY NAME IS KOMORI MAO.
SORRY.. I'LL HAVE THEM RIGHT AWAY!

!
HEY, YOU SCHLEPS!
DUN
W-WE'RE VERY SORRY
IT'S TAGAWA! THE NAGGING SISTER-IN-LAW!
BY THE WAY, YOU SCREWED UP KEEPING SCORE!
SO FREAKING SLOW, EVERY SINGLE TIME...!
HOW LONG CAN IT TAKE TO DO SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS FETCHING WATER?
Y-YES
WE'VE GOING TO PLAY ONE MORE GAME, SO USE THAT WHISTLE PROPERLY THIS TIME!
I'M VERY SORRY
IF YOU'RE NOT GOING TO CALL FOULS RIGHT, IT MESSES UP OUR PRACTICE!
AND WHAT WAS WITH YOUR REFFING IN THE LAST GAME? IT SUCKED!
NO, IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING INCOMPETENT.
I'M SORRY ABOUT HER... THIS IS THE ONLY WAY SHE KNOWS HOW TO SPEAK.
BUT THIS IS A MANAGER'S JOB, RIGHT!?
COME ON, TAGAWA, YOU'RE BEING TOO HARD ON THEM.

I'M OUT OF WATER.
PLONK
...YES
YO.
GLARE
YES!
THIS ISN'T WHAT I THOUGHT BEING A MANAGER'D BE LIKE AT ALL!!!
FW MP
GEEZ... QUIET DOWN, CHINATSU!
SERIOUSLY, LIKE, WHAT IS THE DEAL WITH HER!?
AND LIKE, THIS IS WAY TOO MUCH WORK!
...AND LIKE, AND LIKE...

CHINATSU, YOU'RE SHOUTING!
WHY DON'T THEY TREAT US LIKE THAT!?
Dunno...
What's going on over there?
BUT A MANAGER'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOMEONE EVERYBODY CURRIES FAVOR WITH!
LOOK AT THE BASEBALL TEAM'S MANAGER! HOW THE PLAYERS ARE ALWAYS FLIRTING WITH HER!

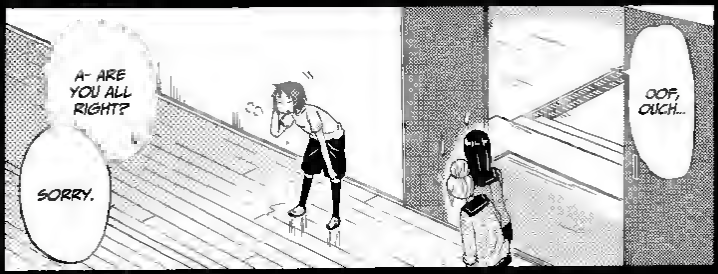
WHY DID IT TURN OUT LIKE THIS?
I'D LIKE TO KNOW THE SAME THING.
SIGH...

AUGG GGHHH! MAOOO OOO!
WHY DID IT HAVE TO TURN OUT LIKE THIIISSS!?
slump
THERE, THERE

I WANT TO BE POPULAR!
WHAT'S THIS...? ALL OF A SUDDEN.
...

ONE MONTH PRIOR
Hey, Mao! Let's be managers!

HOLD ON!
WE'LL JUST GO THERE TO OBSERVE!
WORN DOWN BY HER PERSISTENT PESTERING, I RELUCTANTLY FOLLOWED ALONG TO THE GYM.
SLI-
DE
I'M BORED HERE!
I'LL PASS. I DON'T KNOW A THING ABOUT SPORTS.
YES. THERE IT IS! KAO'S SPECIALTY, THE "I'LL PASS"!
SO YOU'RE OK WITH BEING DEAD BORING FOR YET ANOTHER SCHOOL YEAR!?
FWSH
Yoked off
ALL RIGHT, I'VE JUST DECIDED. I'M DEFINITELY NOT DOING IT.
NO WAY!?
FWMPH
!?
EYEAR RGHH!?
SMACK


A- ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?
SORRY.
OOF, OUCH...

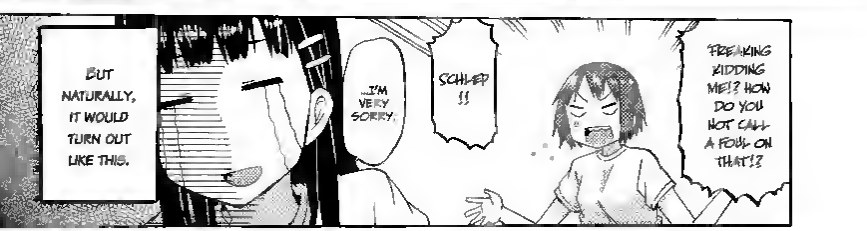
EHM, NO, THAT'S OUR LINE...
W- WE'RE FINE.

huff
huff
YOU WEREN'T HURT AT ALL?

FRESHMAN! GET THE MOP!
DAMN IT...
YOU WERE WAY, WAY OUT OF BOUNDS...
DID IT GO OUT?

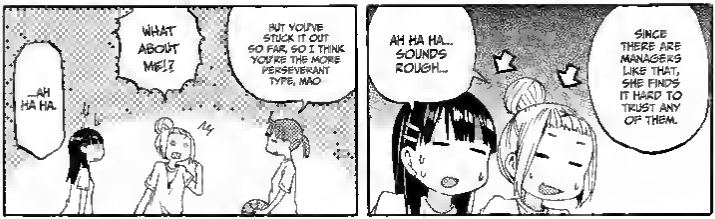
DIVING AFTER THE BALL WITH NO REGARD FOR ANYTHING ELSE IN THE WORLD...
THAT FIGURE, OF A GIRL JUST LIKE ME,

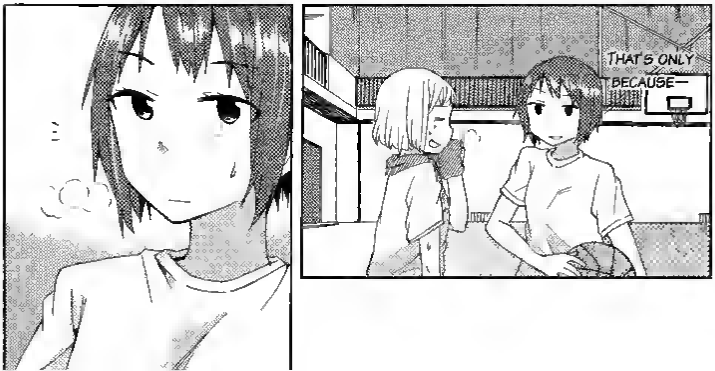
UN-
WITTINGLY,
I MIGHT WANT...
TO TRY BEING A MANAGER AFTER ALL...
...I FOUND MYSELF THINKING THOSE WORDS.
...WAS A LITTLE ASTONISHING TO ME, WHO HAD SPENT MY LIFE SO MEEKLY AND TAMELY.


BUT NATURALLY, IT WOULD TURN OUT LIKE THIS.
...I'M VERY SORRY.
SCHLEP !!
FREAKING KIDDING ME!? HOW DO YOU NOT CALL A FOUL ON THAT!?

HANG IN THERE...
Work like this is what I'm made for.
Should've known I couldn't hack it in a sports club.

SOME OF THEM SIGN UP TO BE MANAGERS, BUT MOST GET TIRED OF IT AND QUIT AFTER ABOUT A WEEK.
ESPECIALLY SO WITH TAGAWA, SINCE SHE'S THE STAR OF THE TEAM.
OUR BOYS' AND GIRLS' TEAMS ARE BOTH PRETTY GOOD, SO YOU GET A LOT OF BANDWAGON-RIDERS AND POSEURS CROWDING AROUND
SHE DOES?
THOUGH, THIS MAY HAVE BEEN INEVITABLE SINCE TAGAWA HATES MANAGERS.

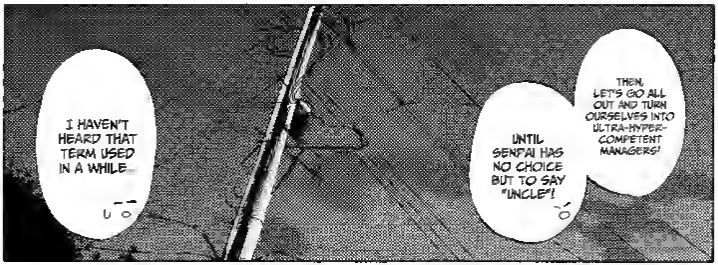

...AH HA HA.
WHAT ABOUT ME!?
BUT YOU'VE STUCK IT OUT SO FAR, SO I THINK YOU'RE THE MORE PERSEVERANT TYPE, MAO
AH HA HA... SOUNDS ROUGH...
SINCE THERE ARE MANAGERS LIKE THAT, SHE FINDS IT HARD TO TRUST ANY OF THEM.


THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE—

I'm too afraid to tell her I want to quit
QUIT SPACING OUT! SCHLEP!
GLARE

ONCE IN A WHILE YOU GOTTA GIVE 'EM A PIECE OF YOUR MIND! STRAIGHT UP!
THAT'S 'CAUSE YOU'RE ALL CRINGING AND WEAK-KNEED, MAO!
SAY WHAT SHE WILL, BUT SHE DEFINITELY RESERVES SOME SPECIAL KIND OF HATRED FOR ME
THAT IS ABSO-LUTELY NOT POSSIBLE...

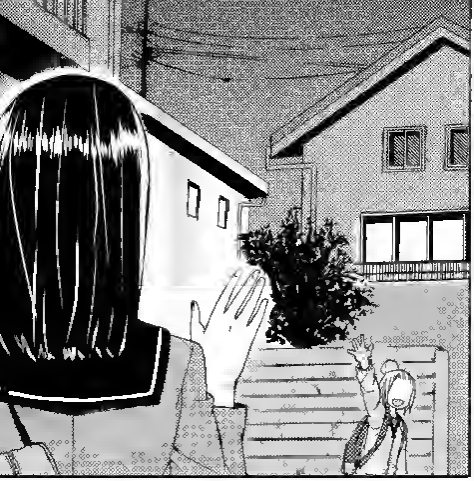
Sigh
ALL WE DO IS GET YELLED AT. I'M REALLY NOT CUT OUT FOR IT...
I THOUGHT MANAGER WOULD BE A COOLER SORT OF JOB, BUT...


I HAVEN'T HEARD THAT TERM USED IN A WHILE...
UNTIL SENPAI HAS NO CHOICE BUT TO SAY "UNCLE"!
THEN, LET'S GO ALL OUT AND TURN OURSELVES INTO ULTRA-HYPER-COMPETENT MANAGERS!

WE'RE QUITTING?
Ha!
I CALL IT THE "SAY UNCLE STRATEGY!"
THEN, WHEN WE'VE GOT HER WHOLLY DEPENDENT AND SAYING "PLEASE DON'T LEAVE USSSS," WE ENTHUSIASTICALLY RESIGN!

TH-
THAT'S NOT...!
WHAT THE HECK! EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE THE ONE WHO REALLY WANTS SENPAI TO ACKNOWLEDGE YOU!

YOU JUST SAID "STUPID"!
AS A PLAN, IT'S A LOT LIKE YOU: STUPIDLY OPTIMISTIC.



YES, ALL RIGHT, I'VE GOT IT
THIS STRATEGY IS ALL FOR YOUR SAKE, YOU KNOW!
ANYWAY THAT'S ENOUGH FUSSY-FOOTING AROUND! WE'RE TAKING A POSITIVE APPROACH TO THIS!

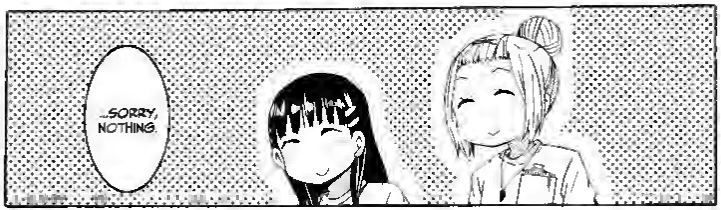
A "SAY UNCLE" STRATEGY, HUH?
NEVER EVEN CONSIDERED SOMETHING LIKE THAT

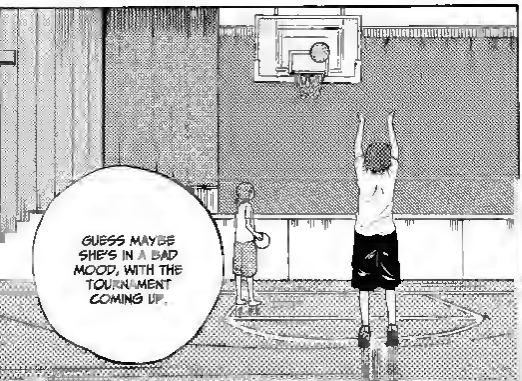
GEEZ! YOU REALLY CAN'T DO A THING ON YOUR OWN...
MAO-MAO...
SLUMPPP
...

To make Tagawa-senpai totally dependent on me...

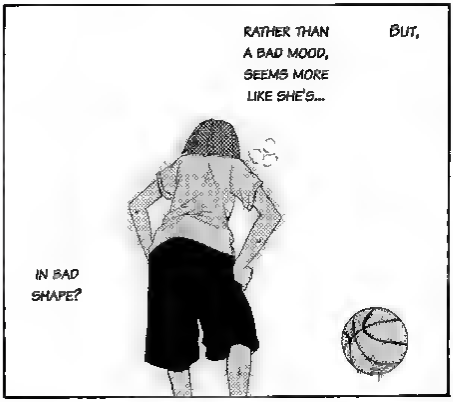
GRIT
ALL RIGHT!
DON'T SPACE OUT! SCHEEP!!
That might not be so ba—
...Mm.
WH
AP
...
THIS ONE TIME,
SENPAI, SOME SPORTS DRINK?
DON'T WANT IT NOW
...
SHALL WE TRY
WE WASHED THE BIBS WITH HIGH-QUALITY FABRIC SOFTENER!
WE AIN'T USING THE BIBS TODAY.
GIVING IT OUR ALL!?
WE PUT THE SCORE-BOOK IN ORDER—
I TOLD YOU, YOU'RE DOING IT THE WRONG WAY
YOUR TOWEL—
FWP

SENPAI—
...
GOD, WHAT IS *WITH* YOU PEOPLE TODAY?
WHAT? WHADDYA WANT!?


...SORRY, NOTHING.


GUESS MAYBE SHE'S IN A BAD MOOD, WITH THE TOURNAMENT COMING UP.

What's her deal?
THIS IS FREAKING FUTILE
SPL
KE
YEAH..


BUT,
RATHER THAN A BAD MOOD, SEEMS MORE LIKE SHE'S...
IN BAD SHAPE?

...MAYBE

MANAGER, CAN I GET A MASSAGE?
SURE THING.

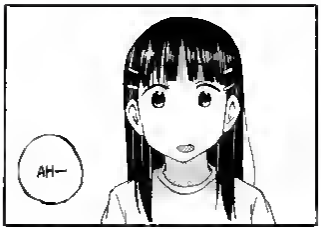
ALL RIGHT WE'LL CALL THAT A WRAP FOR TODAY.
EVERYBODY SPLIT UP AND START GETTING COOLED DOWN.

W-WELL, BUT YOU KNOW, I MAY NOT LOOK IT, BUT I'M ACTUALLY PRETTY GOOD WITH MASSAGES...
I'M GOOD
WOULD YOU LIKE A MASSAGE?

EXCUSE ME,
SENPAI

AND IT LOOKED LIKE
YOUR LEG WAS CAUSING YOU SOME TROUBLE, RIGHT, SENPAI?
!

I CAN NEVER KEEP UP REFEREEING AND ALWAYS MAKE A MESS OF IT, BUT I TOOK MY TIME AND READ ALL UP ABOUT THIS KIND OF THING.
PLEASE, LEAVE IT TO ME.
Sportsman's
Massage and Taping

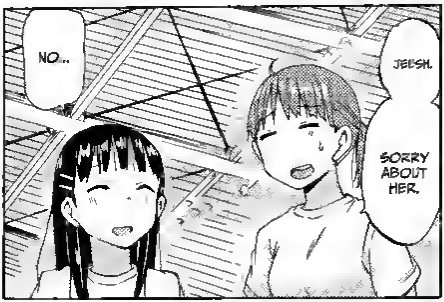

AH—

SO—
I SAID, I'M GOOD.
YOU'RE A FREAKING PEST

I'M SORRY

AH— HEY!
I'M LEAVING..
HOLD UP, TAGAWA! THAT'S OUT OF LINE..

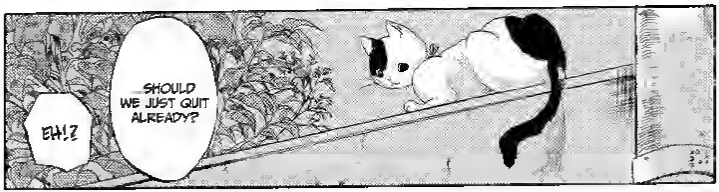
..IT'S ALL RIGHT


NO...
JEESH.
SORRY ABOUT HER.

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BLAME YOURSELF LIKE THAT?
BUT I MEAN...
WHA? WHAT THE HELL? YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG!
YOU WERE A MANAGER TO PIT NINAMI-CHAN* TO SHAME!
IT'S MY FAULT FOR BEING MEDDLE-SOME
CHINATSU, I SAID, IT'S FINE.
WHAT'S HER GODDAMN PROBLEM? YOU WERE JUST TRYING TO—
BUT...

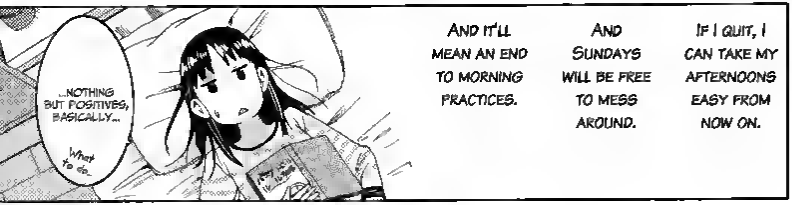
*FROM THE MANGA SERIES TOUGH

WE'RE BASICALLY GLORIFIED SERVANTS
WE'LL NEVER GET IN A GAME, YET WE STILL HAVE TO SHOW UP TO PRACTICE EVERY DAY...
THAT'S RIGHT!
AND WE DON'T HAVE ANY WONDERFUL ENCOUNTERS LIKE THEY DO IN THE OTHER CLUBS!
THAT'S... EH, WELL, MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT...

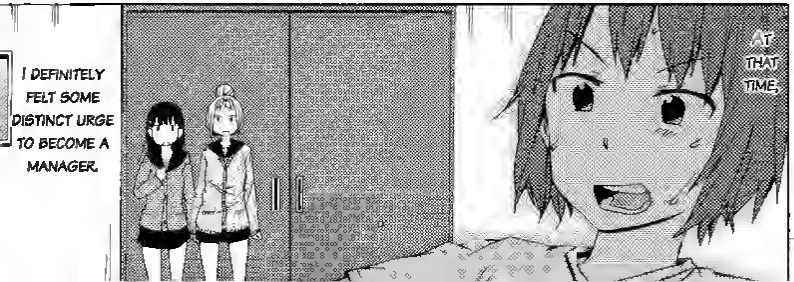

EH!?
...SHOULD WE JUST QUIT ALREADY?

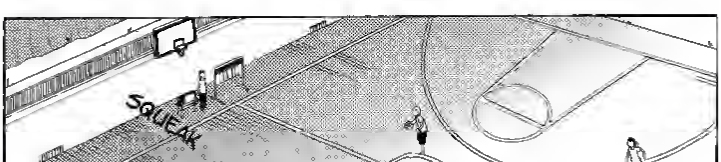
I MEAN, THERE'S NO REASON TO KEEP FORCING OURSELVES.
I'M THE ONE WHO DRAGGED YOU INTO IT, SO DON'T WORRY. I'LL TALK TO THEM MYSELF.
WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?
!

What do I want to do, indeed?


...nothing but positives, basically...
What to do...
And it'll mean an end to morning practices.
And Sundays will be free to mess around.
If I quit, I can take my afternoons easy from now on.

Yet...
why is it that the thought depresses me somehow?
Ooghh


I definitely felt some distinct urge to become a manager.
At that time,


SQUEAK

If I got myself together a bit more,
would she acknowledge me then?

SQUEAK
SQUEAK
TAGAWA, IF THERE'S NOTHING THERE JUST PASS OUT!

DAMN IT!
SENPAI...

HEY, WATCH—

THD
THD

DRIVE

THUD
--OUT!
RGG HHH..
TA-GAWA!
BRING THE COLD SPRAY, QUICK!
I'VE BROUGHT ICE WATER!
CAN YOU STAND?
I'M FINE.
SENPAI, LET ME HAVE A LOOK AT IT.
IT'S NOTHING I JUST TWISTED MY ANKLE A LITTLE.
BUT--
JUST BUG OFF ALREADY!
IT'S GOT NOTHING TO DO WITH YOU, OK!?
...!
HOLD--
THAT'S GOING..

SPLOOSH
...A BIT TOO FAR—

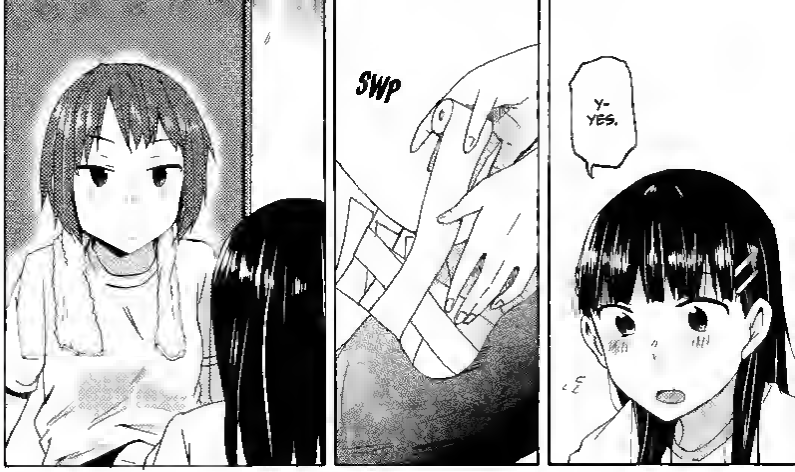
...
WH—
MAO!?

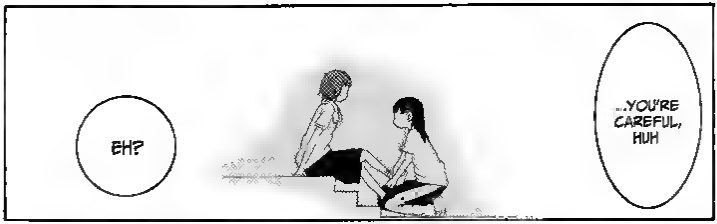
I-I-I-I'M EXTREMELY SORRY!
FWWWSH
INSTANTANEOUS APOLOGY !!!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE ..
BUT, I MEAN.. TO SAY IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH ME...
WELL, MAYBE THAT'S TRUE, BUT...
I KNOW WE STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND A THING ABOUT BASKETBALL, AND WE CAN'T DO OUR JOBS PROPERLY AT ALL ..
I DON'T REALLY GET THE POINT OF BEING A MANAGER, AND GETTING YELLED AT ALL THE TIME MAKES ME WANT TO QUIT. BUT,
NEVERTHELESS, WE ARE YOUR MANAGERS!
SINCE THERE WAS NO MISTAKING THE FEELING I HAD AT THAT MOMENT...

I KNOW WE'RE NOT RELIABLE, BUT PLEASE, RELY ON US A LITTLE!
THERE'S NO WAY I'M LEAVING THINGS LIKE THIS AND RUNNING AWAY!

..YEAH.
TA-GAWA,
YOU UNDER-STAND, RIGHT?

Yeep... she's mad, isn't she...
Why'd I do a thing like that...?
...
!
Achoo!
SO HURRY UP AND FINISH
IT'S FINE.
P-P-P-PLEASE EXCUSE ME, I MUST HAVE DONE SOMETHING—


SWP
Y-YES.


EH?
...YOU'RE CAREFUL, HUH

...
YOU PUT SO MUCH CARE INTO EVERY SEPARATE JOB YOU DID.
YOU WERE SLOW, BECAUSE
THE TOWELS, THE JERSEYS AND THINGS... THEY WERE ALWAYS FOLDED UP SO NEATLY.
THE TRUTH IS, I UNDERSTOOD ALL ALONG.

BUT LATELY I'VE BEEN ONLY THINKING ABOUT MYSELF.
I'VE HAD TROUBLE GETTING READY FOR THE INTER-HIGH TOURNA-MENT,
AND ON TOP OF THAT, I HURT MY LEG .. I'VE BEEN FEELING PRETTY MISERABLE

I DIDN'T PAY ATTEN-TION TO THE THINGS AROUND ME,
AND I'VE BEEN IRRITATED ALL THE TIME
.. I'M SORRY.

DON'T WORRY, WE'LL GET YOU RIGHT BACK TO FORM.
PROB-ABLY...
JUST "PROB-ABLY"?
WELL, I'VE NEVER PLAYED SPORTS BEFORE SO I DON'T REALLY KNOW
BUT I KNOW YOU'LL BE FINE SENPAI
AFTER ALL, NO ONE PRACTICES HARDER THAN YOU, RIGHT?
EVEN I CAN TELL THAT, AS A MANAGER, NOBODY HAS WATCHED YOU MORE THAN I HAVE.

SENPAI?
...
ALL RIGHT, ALL FINISHED!
AH- EH- NO, IT'S VERY COMFORTABLE.
WH—
UM...
...THANK YOU.
...

ON THAT DAY, SENPAI SAID "THANK YOU" FOR THE FIRST TIME...
YEAH.
SHE SAID IT, HUH.
!
POP
YOU MADE HER SAY IT!
...BUT I GOT THE FEELING THAT WHAT I HAD REALLY HEARD HER SAY WAS "UNCLE".
SO, ARE WE GIVING UP ON GIVING UP?
MM. FOR THE MOMENT, MAYBE WE CAN TRY STICKING IT OUT A LITTLE LONGER.
YOU'RE A CALCULATING SORT OF WOMAN, AREN'T YOU.
END

ARTIST: KUMICHOU

RAW PROVIDER: WEATHEREDPEACH

TRANSLATOR: GULF STANDARD

EDITOR: HORN

QUALITY CONTROLLERS: PROCYON, GULF STANDARD, PHYIS